

REMARKS

Claims 13-17 are currently pending in this application. Claims 1-12 and 19-20 have been previously canceled without prejudice while claim 18 has been previously withdrawn.

Claims 13 and 15-17 stand rejected as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,814,176 to Proulx. Claim 14 stands rejected as being allegedly unpatentable over Proulx in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,607,509 to Schrenk or in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,540,537 to Kamp.

The most recent Office action has failed to give patentable weight to certain portions of the pending claims, arguing that previous claim language “is a process limitation,” and that such language is “only accorded weight in so much as [it] limit[s] the structure of the apparatus.” Without addressing the propriety of that argument, the undersigned submits that the current claim language, which recites the first and second openings being “sized, shaped, and positioned, to accommodate and account for the polymer in the die and the rheological conditions that the polymer is being maintained under in the die, such that polymer exiting the first opening of the die plate exits as a first bead and such that the polymer exiting the second opening of the die plate exits as a second bead, the first bead and the second bead contacting one another after exiting the respective die openings of the die plate,” clearly provides structural limitations that are not found in the cited references. For instance, none of the cited references disclose or suggest die openings sized, shaped and positioned in this fashion as none of the dies from these cited references create beads that contact one another as recited in the claim. Based at least on this distinction, the undersigned submits that the claims are patentable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks, the Applicants respectfully assert that each of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and, therefore, request reconsideration and withdrawal of all outstanding rejections and allowance of all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: July 6, 2004

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